513 A quilted cotton cover serves likewise as a top covering but it is of finer material than the one underneath. Quilted covers of silk and silk mixed with cotton are not rare. They are usually about two meters square, so that at times of extreme /240/ cold they can be wrapped all the way around. On my journeys I have camped in the open under such covers, sometimes in a cold of 20° to 30° centigrade, and have been quite comfortable. The natives do not know of sheets; as a result the bed covers, which cannot be washed because of their quilting, leave much to be desired as regards cleanliness after being used for some time. During the day the bed covers are rolled up together and stacked up along the walls with the pillows. For pillows they use cylinders stuffed with cotton and covered with silk or cotton material, similar to our window cushions, which are definitely preferable according to my experience to the feather head pillows used in Europe for they are not only more hygienic but also more comfortable. Only the very rich allow themselves the luxury of bedsteads.

[352] The bedsteads in Turkestan, the arrangement of which may be seen in Figure 89, in spite of their simplicity are the most suitable I have ever seen, and no improvement of our bedsteads, no matter how refined, can compete with them. They combine the advantages of ordinary bedsteads with those of American hammocks and can satisfy the demands of the most pampered sybarite. I have grown so spoiled by using Turkestan bedsteads over many years, that even now I have not yet been able to reconcile myself to the European bed. The bedsteads of Turkestan consist of a wooden frame joined together from a rough beam about ten centimeters thick, resting on four turned legs each about half a meter high, and this frame is covered by a net of thin strings made of horsehair. The bedsteads are something over two meters long and from one to one and a half meters wide. When such a framework is covered with a half dozen soft quilted cotton covers, it affords the greatest comfort imaginable. The body assumes its most comfortable position, thanks to the elasticity of the horsehair net, and one can stretch out on all sides without hindrance and without ever feeling the slightest pressure. If one is contented with a single cover during the hot season, one has a cool bed and need not suffer under the unbearable and unwholsome heat which the European featherbeds produce.

354 The cradles are portable, with a frame covered with a fly net of transparent gauze material, which serves as well for rocking as for carrying the infants. Their arrangement makes one think of a bird cage or of the frames used in Munich for the carrying of large numbers of beermugs (Figure 90; cf. also Figure 157). The heads

and feet of these cradles are made of two wooden hoops bent in the form of semicircles, which are bound together by several horizontal wooden mouldings usually turned and painted in bright colors. /241/ The bottom and the low sidewalls are made of thin boards or shavings. The mothers carry their infants not wrapped up in swaddling clothes as we do but in these portable cradles, which is not only more convenient for the mothers but decidedly more favorable to the development of the child than our methods are. For rocking, the cradle is hung on the branch of a tree outdoors, or in a room or on the veranda on a ceiling beam, by means of a rope fastened to the middle of the upper crosspiece. /Figure 89. Caption: Turkestan Bedstead./ In this cradle, which is in use among all Central Asians, the children lie continually on their backs, and as a consequence the back of the head becomes very much flattened eventually. The noticeable brachycephaly of all Central Asians, Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Sarts, Tadzhiks, Galchas, etc. goes back to this. Therefore the cephalic index is not a physical anthropological index as the physical anthropologists believe, but an ethnographic one. /Figure 90. Caption: Child's cradle in Turkestan./

For the storage of their valuables the urban people of Turkestan use the same wooden boxes imported from Russia, as the nomads use. These are painted red and green and mounted with sheet-iron and are a primary adornment of the living quarters.

In addition to the furnishings already mentioned, in the dwellings of the sedentary population of Turkestan, there remain to be mentioned only the characteristic teapots and teacups, the washbasins, the brass plates, the water pipes and the bird cages.

The teapots (Figure 91, p. 242) are made either of brass or tin-plated copper, are always encased more or less artistically, and have the same shape as the water pitchers and wine pitchers used during mass in the Catholic church. These teapots are filled with water and set on the fire and after the water comes to a boil a proportionate quantity of tea is thrown in. The teacups are either of clay, and thus of domestic manufacture, or else of real or imitation porcelain from China (Figure 123).

/242/ /Figure 91. Caption: Teapots./

The shape of the native washbasins is characteristic. These are used before and after every meal and also often during the day, and are, as a rule, of good and ornamental workmanship. They are likewise made of brass or tin-plated copper and consist of a shallow basin with a sieve-like perforated bottom, under which a vessel like a chamber pot is attached to catch the dirty water from washing. Brass pitchers

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Fig. Turkestan Bedstead.

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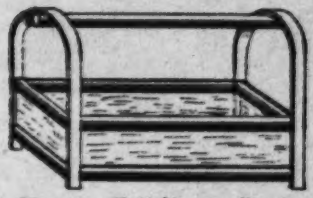

Fig. Child's cradle in Turkestan